

THE 18-MONTH-OLD 32 FEET DOWN IN A DARK HOLE, TEXAS

stumbled like a
woman in love falling
the rocks bruising
maybe or she saw
a deer in the
damp moss the sun
going the blue
sky a locket
on the neck
of someone leaning
to soothe her
skin, good
night, her moving
backward into grey
she has nothing
to hold on to with

THE RAG SOCK DOLL

squeezed under my
mother's kitchen
shelf, I nearly
dumped it packing
what, later, I'd
sell or keep,
have, I imagined,
time to sort thru.
Five socks safety
pinned together,
only the eyes and
lips, the same
pouting rose
bud mouth, huge
long lashed
flirty eyes my
mother doodled on
phone books and
college English
texts in ball point
and red pencil,
made me pause,
use the doll to
pack gold rimmed
tea cups. When I
unpacked it for
the garage sale
a year later,
nothing anyone
would buy, I was

about to toss
it but its
softness, the
eyes with what my
mother sang were
Barney Google eyes,
sucked on me until
I brought it back
to my own house
to stay probably
longer than the gold cups

IT WAS THERE THEN IT WASN'T

like a cat
embryo absorbed
into the mama
cat's blood

or egg plant
that starts
then isn't

a shadow in
the shape of
a roach at
the edge of

where your eye
almost focuses

— Vienna VA

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Lyn Ibbin